

Cordyline species

Cordyline australis
Cordyline australis atropurpurea
Cordyline congesta
Cordyline fruticosa
Cordyline rubra
Cordyline stricta

Cordyline australis, commonly known as the Cabbage Tree or Cabbage Palm is native to New Zealand and is a fast growing palm-like shrub or small tree. It is normally single trunked and from 5 to 8m in height. Foliage is sword-like, 40cm to 1m in length and appearing in large bundles at the end of multiple branches, with large heads of sweetly scented, creamy white flowers produced in late Spring.

Frost hardy, suited to coastal exposure and drought tolerant it likes a fertile well-drained soil in full sun to partial shade. It is particularly suited to pot culture and makes an excellent container plant.

Propagation

WHEN TO SOW: This species seems to dislike germinating at higher temperatures so propagate in the Spring or autumn and at a temperature of 17-18°C. Germination times vary from 14 - 28 days. No other pre-treatment is required other than preliminary soaking overnight.

WHERE TO SOW: Any soil but preferably in moist conditions in sun to part shade.

SOWING: Fill small pots with moist sandy soil and compress and sow two to four seed per pot or as by choice. Maintain mixture in a moist but not damp state. Place in a shady position taking into account the temperature tips above.

CULTIVATION: When large enough to handle, prick the seedlings out into individual pots and grow them on in a warm protected situation until 15 – 20cm and then plant out in their permanent position, in Spring or early Summer, after the risk of frost has passed in colder areas.